



Appendix F Sample Types of Exercises

Experience shows that exercises are the most practical, efficient, and cost effective way to prepare for disasters and crises. The aim for any transit agency should be to develop a progressive exercise program, a long-term approach in which exercises are planned, conducted, and evaluated as building blocks to competency in crisis management.

There are two principal benefits of such a program. First, people practice their role and gain proficiency in crisis management. Second, the coordination among transit providers and local emergency response agencies is improved. These benefits arise not from exercising alone, but from evaluating the exercise and acting upon those results. An exercise has value only when it leads to individual and/or collective improvement.

Key terms used in the development of exercises include the following:

- **Progressive Exercise Program:** A commitment from the transit provider and community public safety agencies to plan and conduct increasingly more challenging exercises over a period of time, to achieve and maintain competency in executing the local crisis management plan.
- **Objective:** A goal expressed in simple, clear, specific, and measurable terms. Serves as the foundation of all exercise planning.
- **Scenario:** The overall outline of how an exercise will be conducted. Includes the narrative, major/detailed sequence of events, problems or messages, and expected actions. Often used interchangeably with the term narrative.
- **Narrative:** A word “picture” that includes all essential elements of information concerning the incident used to initiate an exercise.

Types of exercises include the following:

- **Drill:** Supervised activities that test, develop, or maintain skills in a single response procedure (such as: communications, notification, lockdown, fire) and the possible or probable interaction with local government agency functions (such as: incident command posts, rescue squad entry, police perimeter control) which will involve actual field response. Helps prepare for more complex exercises in which several functions are coordinated and tested.
- **Exercise** An activity designed to: promote emergency preparedness; test or evaluate emergency operations, policies, plans, procedures or facilities, train personnel in emergency duties, and demonstrate operational capabilities.
- **Full-Scale Exercise:** Evaluates the operational capability of emergency response management systems in an interactive manner. Includes the mobilization of emergency personnel and resources required to demonstrate coordination and response capability. Tests total response capability as close to a real emergency as possible.



- **Functional Exercise:** A fully simulated interactive exercise; tests one or more functions in a time-pressured realistic simulation; focuses on policies, procedures, roles, and responsibilities.
- **Orientation Seminar:** An informal discussion designed to familiarize participants with roles, plans, procedures, and resolve questions of coordination and assignment of responsibilities.
- **Tabletop Exercise:** Simulates an emergency situation in an informal, stress-free environment. Designed to elicit discussion as participants examine and resolve problems based on existing crisis management plans.